

ARTICLE APPEARED
ON PAGE **A15**NEW YORK TIMES
6 March 1986**FILE ONLY**

HOSTAGE REPORTED KILLED IN BEIRUT

Islamic Holy War Group Says
It 'Executed' Frenchman
for Reporting to Paris

By **IHSAN A. HIJAZI**

Special to The New York Times

BEIRUT, Lebanon, March 5 — An extremist Moslem organization announced today that it had "executed" one of four Frenchmen it has been holding hostage. There was no independent confirmation of the announcement.

The Moslem group, known as Islamic Holy War, said in a statement sent to Western news agencies here that it had killed the hostage, Michel Seurat, because he had provided the French Government with reports about the Middle East in general and Islamic movements in particular.

The organization added that Mr. Seurat had been killed to protest what was termed French support for Iraq in the war with Iran. A photograph reportedly taken of the Frenchman before his death was distributed with the statement.

Researcher on Middle East

Mr. Seurat, a researcher at the French Center for Studies and Research of the Contemporary Middle East, and Jean-Paul Kauffmann, a journalist working for the French weekly L'Evenement du Jeudi, were kidnapped by gunmen in May 1985 while traveling from the airport to Moslem West Beirut.

Islamic Holy War later took responsibility for their abduction and said it was also holding two staff members of the French Embassy who had previously been kidnapped in the Moslem part of the Lebanese capital.

The Islamic Holy War organization is believed to be made up of Shiite fundamentalists upholding the teachings of the Iranian leader, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini. The group also took responsibility for kidnapping five Americans and for apparently killing one of them.

The presumed American victim — his body has not been found, although a photograph was circulated that claimed to show it — was William Buckley, a political officer at the United States Embassy here. Islamic Holy War said it would not hand over the body unless the Israelis released 100 Palestinian prisoners.

Islamic Holy War has offered to release the other four Americans if the Kuwaiti Government frees 17 activists who carried out a series of bomb attacks in Kuwait in December 1983.

The four Americans are the Rev. Lawrence M. Jenko, a Roman Catholic priest; David P. Jacobsen, a director of the American University Hospital; Thomas M. Sutherland, the dean of agriculture at the American University, and Terry A. Anderson, chief Middle East correspondent for The Associated Press.

A sixth American, Peter Kilburn, was the librarian at the American University when he disappeared in December 1984. No group has taken responsibility for his abduction.

Announcement a Surprise

The announcement today that Mr. Seurat had been killed came as a surprise because earlier reports talked of signs that the four Frenchmen would be set free under pressure from Syria.

But Syria's President, Hafez al-Assad, said in an interview with the French newspaper Libération last month that the kidnappers had reneged on their promise to free the French captives. He did not mention the American hostages.

Islamic Holy War had asked that France release two men held in French prisons for trying to assassinate Iran's former Prime Minister, Shahpur Bakhtiari, in Paris five years ago. France turned down that request.

An effort last year by Terry Waite, a special representative of the Archbishop of Canterbury, to win the freedom of the Americans failed.